

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A dehumidification process for granulated plastics materials, comprising a process-gas treatment step ~~(4)~~ in which the moisture content of the process gas is reduced substantially, and a subsequent granule-treatment step ~~(3)~~ by contact with the process gas having a reduced moisture content, characterized ~~in that, and~~ in the process-gas treatment step, the reduction of the moisture content of the process gas is regulated ~~(20)~~ in dependence on the granules to be treated.

2. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~E~~claim 1 in which the process gas is air.

3. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~E~~claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, in which the reduction of the moisture content is regulated by the bypassing ~~(21, 22)~~ of a variable fraction of the process gas between positions upstream and downstream of the moisture-content reduction treatment.

4. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 in which the reduction of the moisture content is regulated, downstream of the treatment to reduce the moisture content of the process gas, by means of partial humidification ~~(30)~~ of the gas.

5. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~Claims~~claim 3 ~~and 4~~ in which the partial humidification is performed downstream of the recombination of the fraction of process gas which is subjected to moisture-content reduction treatment with

the fraction of process gas which has bypassed that treatment.

6. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~claim 1 in which the moisture-content reduction is achieved by the passage of the process gas through dehumidification towers (~~7a, 7b~~) and is regulated by variation of the operative efficiency of the towers.

7. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~Claim 6~~ in which the operative efficiency of the dehumidification towers is varied by modifying the regeneration phase thereof.

8. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~claim 1 in which the reduction of the moisture content of the process gas is regulated in dependence on the use of the final product manufactured from the granules.

9. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~claim 1 in which the granulated plastics material is prepared from based on polyethylene terephthalate (PET).

10. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~claim 1 in which the moisture content of the process gas can be varied between a first value at which the dew point of the gas is -10°C and a second value at which the dew point is -60°C.

11. (Currently Amended) TheA process according to Claimsclaim 9 and 10 in

which the moisture content of the process gas is regulated in a manner such as to have a dew point of between -10°C and -40°C when the granules to be subjected to dehumidification are intended for the production of containers for beverages of delicate ~~flavour~~flavor and to have a dew point of between -50°C and -60°C when the granules to be subjected to dehumidification are intended for the production of containers for beverages of strong ~~flavour~~flavor.

12. (Currently Amended) A plant for dehumidification of granulated plastics materials comprising a process-gas treatment unit ~~(4)~~ which is arranged to reduce the moisture content of the process gas substantially and a granule treatment unit ~~(3)~~ for the treatment of the granules by ~~means of the process gas, and characterized in that~~ the plant ~~includes comprises~~regulation means ~~(20)~~ for the regulation of the moisture content of the process gas.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A plant according to ~~E~~claim 12 in which the regulation means ~~(20)~~ comprise bypass means ~~(21, 22)~~ for bypassing the process-gas treatment unit ~~(4)~~ ~~in order to~~ bypass a variable fraction of the process gas between positions upstream and downstream of the process-gas treatment unit.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A plant according to ~~E~~claim 13 in which the process-gas treatment unit ~~(4)~~ comprises a pair of dehumidification towers ~~(7a, 7b)~~ of which one is connected to the granule-treatment unit ~~(3)~~ and the other is connected to a regeneration circuit ~~(15)~~, as well as a first distribution unit and a second distribution unit ~~(13, 14)~~ which are disposed upstream and downstream of the dehumidification towers, respectively, and which are arranged selectively to connect one or other of the

towers to the granule-treatment unit or to the regeneration circuit, the bypass means including a line ~~(21)~~ extending between the first and second distribution units, a regulation valve ~~(22)~~ mounted in the line, and control means ~~(23)~~ for controlling the regulation valve in order to regulate the fraction of process gas to be bypassed between the distribution units ~~(13, 14)~~ in dependence on the desired moisture content of the process gas output by the gas-treatment unit.

15. (Currently Amended) TheA plant according to ~~any one of Claims 12, 13 and 14~~ in which the regulation means comprise a partial humidification unit ~~(30)~~ disposed downstream of the process-gas treatment unit.

16. (Currently Amended) TheA plant according to ~~Claim 14 or Claim 15~~ in which the partial humidification unit ~~(30)~~ is disposed downstream of the second distribution unit ~~(14)~~.

17. (New) The process according to claim 2, in which the reduction of the moisture content is regulated by the bypassing of a variable fraction of the process gas between positions upstream and downstream of the moisture-content reduction treatment.

18. (New) The process according to claim 2, in which the reduction of the moisture content is regulated, downstream of the treatment to reduce the moisture content of the process gas, by means of partial humidification of the gas.

19. (New) The process according to claim 4, in which the partial

humidification is performed downstream of the recombination of the fraction of process gas which is subjected to moisture-content reduction treatment with the fraction of process gas which has bypassed that treatment.

20. (New) The process according to claim 10 in which the moisture content of the process gas is regulated in a manner such as to have a dew point of between -10°C and -40°C when the granules to be subjected to dehumidification are intended for the production of containers for beverages of delicate flavor and to have a dew point of between -50°C and -60°C when the granules to be subjected to dehumidification are intended for the production of containers for beverages of strong flavor.

21. (New) The plant according to claim 13, in which the regulation means comprise a partial humidification until disposed downstream of the process-gas treatment unit.

22. (New) The plant according to claim 14, in which the regulation means comprise a partial humidification until disposed downstream of the process-gas treatment unit.

23. (New) The plant according to claim 15, in which the partial humidification unit is disposed downstream of the second distribution unit.